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Message Text

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46
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DRC-01 RSC-01 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07

INR-10 L-03 NEA-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 PRS-01 SPC-03

TRSE-00 MBFR-04 SAJ-01 SS-15 NSC-10 H-03 OMB-01

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 FMC-04 CG-00 COA-02 DLOS-06

IO-15 /137 W
---------- 026065
P 101500A OCT 73
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4023X
USIA WASHDC PRIORITY
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
COMICEDEFOR
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

UNCLAS REYKJAVIK 1182

JOINT USIS/EMBASSY MESSAGE

DEPT PASS EUR/NE FOR AMBASSADOR IRVING

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJ: MEDIA EMPHASIS: FOREIGN MINISTER IN WASHINGTON

SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER AGUSTSSON'S TALKS IN
WASHINGTON HAVE BEEN THE NUMBER TWO STORY IN OCT 4 AND 5
ICELANDIC MEDIA, FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS IN ICELANDI/BRITISH DIS-
PUTE. RADIO AND TV HAVE CARRIED DAILY REPORTS FROM ITS CORRES-
PONDENT TRAVELLING WITH FORNMIN. ALL MEDIA REPORTS CITE FORN-
MIN AS SAYING HIS OBJECTIVE IS REMOVAL OF ALL FOREIGN TROOPS
FROM ICELAND. ALL BUT PEOPLES ALLIANCE'S THJODVILJINN STATE HIS
DESIRE TO REMAIN IN NATO, TO PERMIT USE OF THE AIRPORT FOR
U.S. PLANES TO LAND AND REFUEL, TO HAVE ICELANDERS TAKE OVER
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CERTAIN FUNCTIONS, AND POSSIBLY TO PERMIT THE CONTINUATION OF
A SMALL GROUP OF (PRESUMABLY CIVILIAN) "TECHNICIANS." MOST
PROMINENT PLAY OCT 5 IS IN THJODVILJINN WHICH HEADLINES AT TOP
OF PAGE ONE AN APPARENT FONMIN QUOTE: "I HAVE NOT COMFORTED
THE AMERICANS." END SUMMARY.

MORGUNBLADID, INDEPENDENCE PARTY (OPPOSITION), IN OCT 5
STORY FROM WASHINGTON STRINGER GEIRI H. HAARDE, QUOTES FORNMIN
IN INTERVIEW AS SAYING "OUR PROPOSAL IS THAT THE DEFENSE FORCE
SHOULD LEAVE." HE SAID U.S. OFFICIALS HAD STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF
IDF BASE. WHEN ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. ARGUMENTS AND THE NATO
REPORT HAD CHANGED HIS POSITION, HE SAID THEY HAD NOT.
FORNMIN CITED AS SAYING THAT U.S. OFFICIALS HAD HINTED
THT THE SURVEILLANCE FUNCTIONS NOW CONDUCTED AT THE
BASE MIGHT BE PERFORMED FROM BASES IN SCOTLAND AND GREEN-
LAND. STRINGER HAARDE HAD CONTACTED JOHN KING TO ASK
WHETHER DANISH AND/OR BRITISH GOVERNMENTS HAD BEEN CONTACTED
IN THIS REGARD. KING REPLY WAS THAT HE DID NOT THINK SO.
WHEN HAARDE ASKED FONMIN ABOUT HIS U.M. PRESS CONFERENCE CO-
MMENT THAT ICELANDERS MIGHT PERFORM THE ROLES OF THE PRE-
SENT U.S. STAFF, HE SAID HE HAD NOT YET DISCUSSED THIS POSSI-
BILITY WITH THE U.S.. ADDED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW IF AND HOW
THIS MIGHT BE DONE IN ORDER TO FULFILL ICELAND'S OBLIGATION TO
NATO. FONMIN SAID FURTHER THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED CIVIL AIR
AGREEMENT WITH U.S. OFFICIALS, BUT DID NOT BELIEVE U.S. WOULD
USE THIS AS A TOOL IN ITS NEGOTIATIONS. FORNMIN SAID NEXT
SESSION OF TALKS WOULD BE HELD IN REYKJAVIK OR WASHINGTON.
HE SAID ICELANDIC GOVERNMENT WOULD PROBABLY PUT A PROPOSAL
BEFORE THE PARLIAMENT SOON AFTER CHRISTMAS ON THE BASE ISSUE.
HE DID NOT KNOW HOW THE VOTE MIGHT GO AND EXPECTED MPS TO HAVE
INDEPENDENT OPINIONS ON THE MATTERS.

TIMINN, ORGAN OF FORNMIN'S OWN PROGRESSIVE PARTY,
QUOTES HIM AS SAYING HE VIEWS PRESENT TALKS AS EXCHANGES OF
VIEWS RATHER THAN AS FULL FLEDGED NEGOTIATIONS. HE HOPED NEXT
ROUND WOULD BE IN REYKJAVIK. TIMINN ALSO CARRIES A NORWEGIAN
TELEGRAM BUREAU STORY OUT OF WASHINGTON SAYING FONMIN DID NOT
THINK TROOPS FROM OTHER NATIONS MIGHT REPLACE U.S. TROOPS.
HE HOPED TO FIND OTHER WAYS TO FULFILL ICELAND'S OBLIGATION TO
NATO. A POSSIBLE SOLUTION, HE SAID, MIGHT BE THE TRAINING
OF ICELANDIC PERSONNEL TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BASE.
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"WE ARE PREPARED TO KEEP THE BASE OPEN FOR LANDINGS AND
REFUELING BY U.S. AIRCRAFT WORKING IN THE AREA," HE SAID.
OTHER COALITION DAILY, PEOPLES ALLIANCE'S THJODVILJINN USES AS
ITS BANNER PAGE ONE HEAD AN APPAREND FORNMIN QUOTE: "I
HAVE NOT COMFORTED THE AMERICANS." IN A STORY WHICH REFERS
SARCASTICALLY AND TYPICALLY TO THE BASE AS "OUR PROTECTORS,"
THJODVILJINN CITES FORNMIN AS SAYING U.S. OFFICIALS ARE VERY

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CONCERNED ABOUT LOSING THEIR POSITION AT THE BASE. HE HAS
BEEN UNABLE, HE SAID, TO LIGHTEN THEIR CONCERN. THERE IS NO
INDICATION IN THJODVILJINN STORY THAT PAPER CONTACTED FONMIN
DIRECTLY.

DAILY RADIO AND TELEVISION REPORTS FILED BY ARNI GUNNARSSON
APPARENTLY ARE FACTUAL WITHOUT COMMENT.

MEANWHILE EDITORIAL DEBATE ON NATO'S ROLE OR NON-ROLE IN
BRITISH DECISION TO WITHDRAW FLEET (SEE REFTEL) CONTINUES.
ALSO THJODVILJINN OCT 4 AND 5 EDITORIALLY GOES AFTER MORGUNBLADID
(AND BY IMPLICATION, THE PRIME MINISTER) EMPHASIZING WHAT IT
SAYS WILL BE THE COAST GUARD'S TASK TO CUT TRAWLER LINES
OF ANY BRITISH TRAWLERS FISHING WITHIN THE 50 MILES.

ICELANDIC MEAIA HAVE ALSO SHOWN MUCH PLEASURE IN APPARENTLY
WIDE PLAY GIVEN ICELANDIC CASE IN U.S., WORLD MEDIA.
MARTIN

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
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TAGS: PFOR, IC, PFOR
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